

Memo

To: Class of '72 Executive Committee
From: Tom Hoster '72
cc: Sue Walsh, Zorela Jimenez, Traslyn Butler h72, Maribeth Regan h72, Deb Yu '86
Date: July 8, 2026
Re: Annual Giving Results 2025-26

I am pleased to report that the Annual Giving results for the past year for the Class of '72 were excellent, even by Class of '72 standards.

For the Annual Giving year 2025-26 – our 54th Reunion year – the Class contributed \$332,159, while achieving a participation rate of 66.2%, with 485 out of 733 classmates making gifts.

Participation. Princeton has 84 classes with living alumni. Remarkably, our participation was the fourth highest of all 84 classes, behind only the 60th Reunion class, the 25th Reunion class, and the perennial juggernaut Class of '63. Ahead of every other major-reunion class.

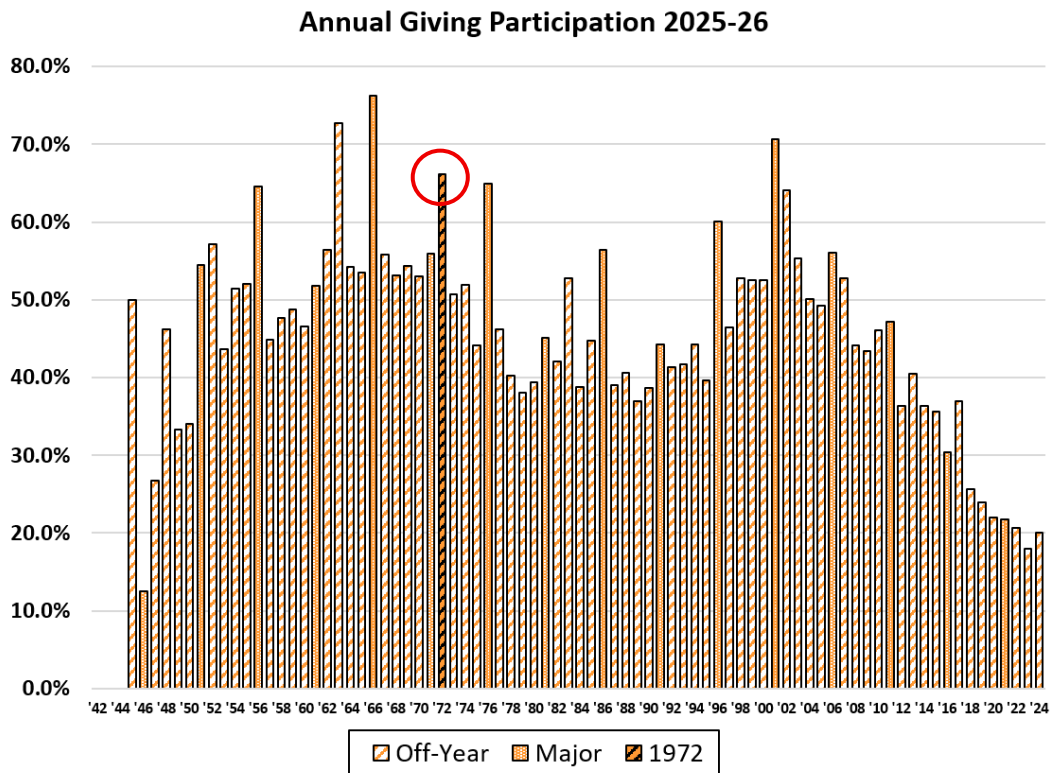
I still recall when we took pride in having the best participation of the decade of the seventies. And then we took pride in having the best participation of the fifty youngest classes. Now we take pride in having one of the best participation rates of ALL Princeton classes!

Our participation rate of 66.2% marks the twenty-eighth year in a row that the Class of '72 has been above the magic 60% level. Indeed, our participation was the sixth highest participation in the 54 years that we have been out, including all of our major reunion campaigns.

Our Annual Giving participation was almost 17 percentage points above the average for the other nine classes in our decade of the seventies (which,

remember, includes two major reunion classes). Our participation rate was 66.2%; the average for the other nine classes in our decade was 49.5%.

This graph will give you a sense of the enormity of our performance.



Dollars. At \$332,159, our dollar total was also excellent – the fourth highest dollar total out of the 44 off-year campaigns we have had.

Overall Campaign Results. Overall, the University's Annual Giving campaign was a success – more than \$79.6 million was raised. Overall participation continues to be challenging – at 43.7%, participation was down a bit compared to last year.

Volunteers. Our results would not have been possible without the efforts of almost twenty classmates who made calls, sent emails, and did their follow-ups. That group included Ron Brown, Owen Curtis, Andy Dayton, Daryl English, Doug Harrison, Bob Hodrick, Charlie Hughes, Barbara Julius, Chris Loomis, Merc Morris, Rod Plummer, Mike Schneider, Rob Smart, Tony Tichenor, Bill Watts, Bob Wright, and two newcomers – John Drozdal and Elliott McClinton – and that list does not include classmates who participated in phonathons.

It is significant, and gratifying, that the majority of our Annual Giving volunteers serve other roles in Class leadership positions – they take on their Annual Giving responsibilities in addition to everything else they do for the Class.

Approach. Our success validates, I believe, our philosophy on solicitations – that we need to make our solicitations more personal, not more numerous. It is tempting – and easy – to hit classmates with a never-ending barrage of Princeton letters, emails, and other solicitations; we don't let that happen. The Class of '72 volunteer team embraced the philosophy of making solicitations personal, fostering and continuing personal relationships with their chosen classmates. Our outstanding results reflect that approach and their efforts.

In particular, It can be challenging to make emails personal – it is, I think, an inherently impersonal medium. In the 62 emails that I sent out in the campaign, I sent them one at a time, putting the classmate's name in the subject line ("One Month Left, Bill!") and including a unique first line in the body ("I hope that things are good in Vermont"). Emails are impersonal, but they can be a good vehicle for soliciting a classmate who gives online, because the link to the AG giving site can be embedded in the message.

This was the tenth year that I have written a personal thank you note to each of our donors – 494 notes this year. For this year's thank-you notes, the Annual Giving office printed up notecards for us with a photograph of the Class of '72 boat that was dedicated last May.



This was my 34th year as Class Agent. It was another challenging year, as a number of classmates declined to give, following the University's general "wokeness", the renaming of the Woodrow Wilson School, or some other issue (pick your poison). The volunteers and I were, however, able to convince a few of these folks to make token gifts to support class participation, which shows the strength and spirit of the Class.

Excellent participation in Annual Giving can be very hard to achieve – it seems that with every passing year, more classmates grow distant from the University and the Class. Retrieving those classmates and bringing them back into the Annual Giving fold can be a challenge. But credit our Class leadership that believes that our Annual Giving results are a unifying theme that brings the Class together.

In the Annual Giving office at Princeton, front-liner, Zorela Jimenez, supplied us with everything we needed to be as productive as possible. Since I started my Class Agent work 39 years ago, I have seen the Annual Giving office transition

from mail to fax to the Internet – from printouts to downloads. The AG Office continues to evolve with the times, now exploiting the available technology in their mission.

That said, the Class of '72 continues to rely heavily on handwritten communications – in both solicitations and thank-you notes – and the High Priestess of Printing, Maribeth Regan h72, has never failed to come through for us. In addition to the 494 thank you notes, for example, I sent out 104 handwritten solicitation cards to classmates, using notecards that Maribeth printed for us in previous years.

The Class of '72 continues to be in an excellent position to extend our string of successful Annual Giving campaigns as we head into our big 55th Reunion next May.

That's it. I'm taking the summer off!

Cheers,